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Attorney Docket No. VPI/00-117

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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**DEC 15 2003**

Applicants : Jean-Damien Charrier et al.  
Application No. : 09/877,832 Confirmation No. : 9982  
Filed : June 7, 2001  
For : CASPASE INHIBITORS AND USES THEREOF  
Group Art Unit : 1624  
Examiner : Venkataraman Balasubramanian

*Not to be entered*

*VB  
1/12/04*

Cambridge, Massachusetts  
December 15, 2003

Hon. Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

AMENDMENT AND REPLY TO OFFICE ACTION

Sir:

This is in reply to the July 14, 2003 Office Action in the above-identified application. Applicants have submitted herewith a two-month extension of time to respond to the Office Action. The time for reply to this Office Action is, therefore, up to and including December 15, 2003 (December 14 being a Sunday). Accordingly, this reply is timely filed.

The Amendments to the claims begin at page 2 of this Reply. Remarks begin at page 8 of this Reply.